



County of San Bernardino

# Program Dispatch

First Edition, Fiscal Year 2010-2011



## Integrated New Family Opportunities (INFO)

**Mental Health Services Act Dollars  
Working in the Community!**

### Service Goals

The objectives of Integrated New Family Opportunities (INFO) are:

- **Reduce recidivism** and criminal behavior
- **Improve family relations** through effective communication
- **Increase school attendance**
- **Reduce and/or eliminate substance abuse**
- **Reduce cost** to the County of San Bernardino

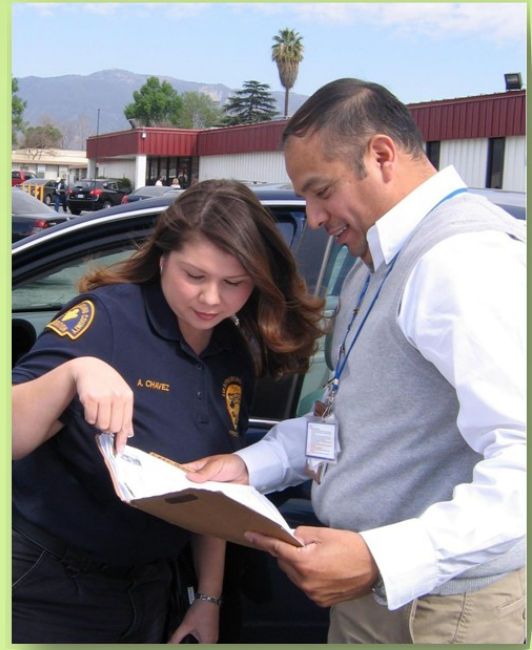
## Why was INFO Created?

Juvenile arrests in the County of San Bernardino (County) increased steadily from 2002 to 2005. In 2005, **7,482 juveniles** were booked and detained in the County Juvenile Detention and Assessment Centers (JDACs). **The County had a significantly higher juvenile arrest rate than the rest of the state.**

The lack of early identification (screening, assessment and referral) of **mental health (MH) and alcohol and drug (AOD) problems in the County's juvenile justice population was evident in that only 8% of the County's detained juvenile justice population was identified with MH or AOD problems as opposed to 70% identified in the same population nationwide.**

Many youth are detained and placed in the system for relatively minor, non-violent offenses, but end up engaged in the system because of the lack of community-based mental health and AOD treatment services.

There was a need for a partnership between the Department of Behavioral Health, Probation and the Courts and the program was started.



## Positive Results

INFO participant's combined **sustained allegations were reduced to 36 after entering the program as opposed to 328 prior to entering the program.** Sustained allegations include felonies, misdemeanors and status offenses. Recidivism as of June 30, 2010, was **20%.**

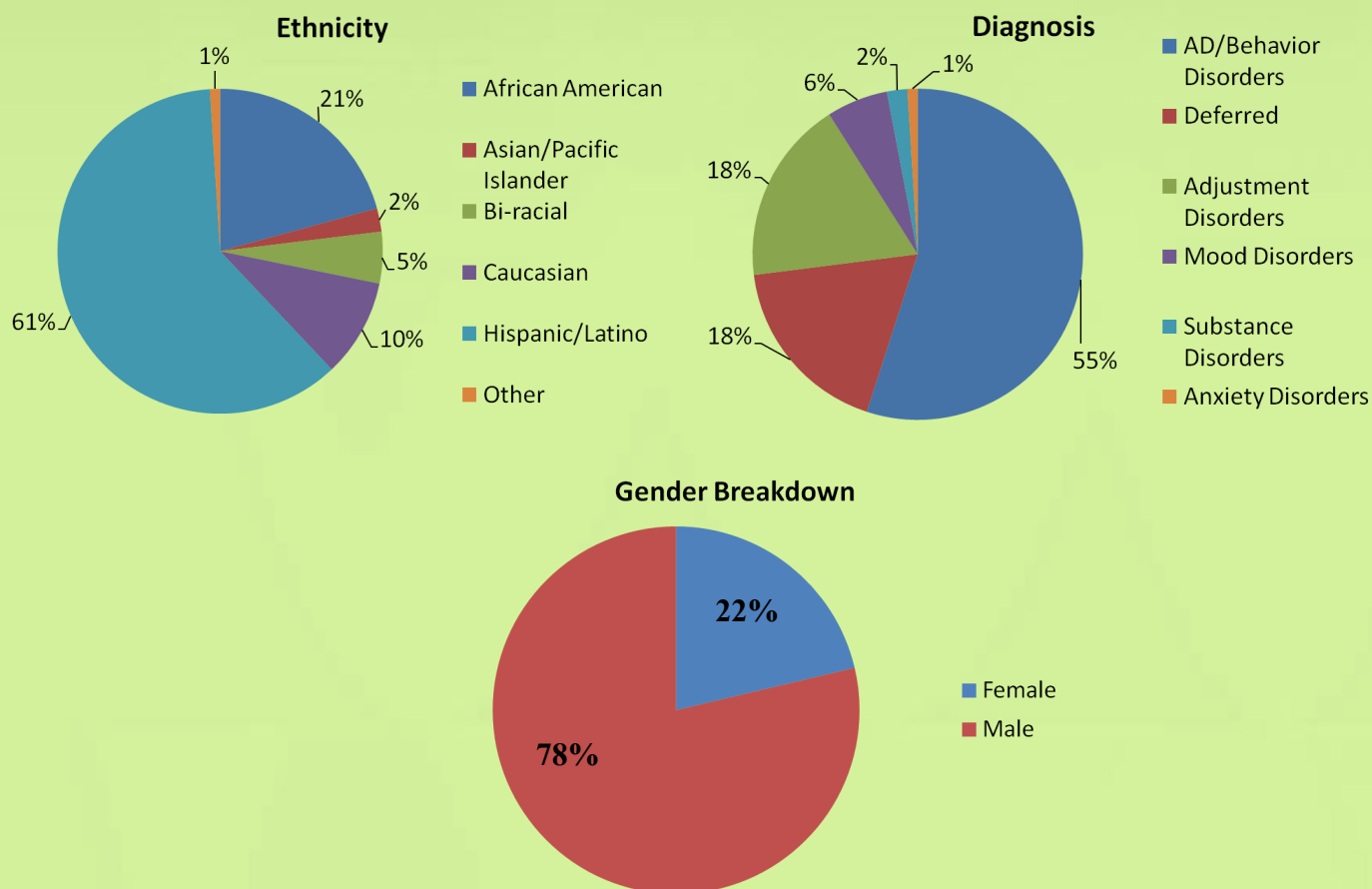
As of June 30, 2010, **107 minors and their families had successfully completed the program.**

All minors who are active in or have completed the program attend school regularly. **This is a 62% improvement to their pre-INFO school attendance rate.**

Prior to entering the program, **89% of the minors** presented with a history of substance abuse. During the course of the program, with drug testing as a regular part of the intervention, **only 12% of the minors continued to use drugs.**

Prior to entering the INFO program, minors spent **4,703 days** in a Juvenile Detention and Assessment Center (JDAC) at an estimated **cost of \$1,222,780.** After entering the INFO program, minors spent **726 days** in a JDAC at an estimated **cost of \$188,760, for a total reduction of 3,977 days in a JDAC facility and a savings of \$1,034,020.** Costs are approximately \$260 per day.

## Program Data



## Making A Difference

Joana was referred to the INFO Program in November 2010. Joana was a 15-year-old Latina female who was placed on probation for petty theft charges. Prior to becoming involved in the program she had an extensive history of running away from home, sometimes being gone for months at a time, and was smoking marijuana daily. At the time Joana and her mom began working with INFO, she was staying with a family friend because there was such a high level of conflict between mom and daughter, and mom's work schedule made it difficult to consistently supervise her. Once mom and daughter began working with the family therapist, they were better able to negotiate their differences and Joana moved back into the house with mom and her siblings.

Joana and her mom made great progress in changing their communication patterns, and as a result, mom was able to implement more consistent structure and consequences in the household that Joana has followed. In addition to family therapy, Joana received Intensive Probation supervision during this time, consistently tested clean for all drug use and attended school on a regular basis. She was also connected with the San Bernardino County Museum and finished all of her community service hours. Joana graduated from the INFO program on May 5, 2011, and her Probation case has been closed.

## Challenges

There is currently a wait list for the program due to the need for bi-lingual services. In addition, the current economic condition has resulted in fewer community and county resources to assist minors and their families.

## Solutions in Progress

- A new voucher process to meet the basic needs of families has been instituted
- The INFO program continues to develop new relationships and community resources including working with DBH clinics to expedite services to INFO minors and families

## In Their Own Words

Rafaela, the parent of a 15-year-old Hispanic female client who had a history of running away and not communicating with her family, is quoted as saying, "The INFO team came and became a part of my family and **now I am able to know that my daughter is safe** because she checks in with me and talks with me."

One minor coined the phrase for the INFO program as **"Restoring Families, One by One"** which is now the INFO mantra.

Darla, the parent of a 16-year-old who was having difficulty passing his classes and staying sober offered, **"Thanks to the INFO Team, I got my son back."**

Maria and Adriana, 15- and 16-year-old sisters presented, **"We did not want counseling and people coming to our house and now we don't want our therapist to leave because life is much better now."**

### Collaborative Partners

The INFO Program would like to acknowledge the support of the following agencies :

Department of Behavioral Health  
Administration

County of San Bernardino  
Probation Department

Juvenile Court San Bernardino

County of San Bernardino  
District Attorney's Office

County of San Bernardino  
Public Defender's Office

Mary's Mercy Center

Young Visionaries Leadership  
Academy

Children's Fund

North San Bernardino Jr.  
All-American Football & Cheer

**These agencies helped INFO meet the needs of our families, allowed our minors to perform community service, and assisted with resources for the basic life needs of our families.**

**For information regarding services please call:**

**ACCESS UNIT**

**(888) 743-1478 or (888) 743-1481 (TTY)**

Dial 2-1-1 to get information and referrals for health and social services.  
Get connected with a live operator 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.